

# **Comprehensive Redesign of the Rhode Certification System**

## **FAQs**

### **Changes:**

1. The new system provides for the issuance of a three year Certificate of Eligibility for Employment to individuals applying for certification for the 1st time after January 1, 2005. This eliminates the issuance of a provisional certificate and links certification to employment in a school district
2. The new system provides for a single five-year professional certificate for individuals employed in the schools of Rhode Island. This eliminates employment under a provisional certificate.
3. The new system provides for certification renewal by the completion of an Individual Professional Development Plan (I-Plan) every five years. This eliminates certification renewal based on nine college/university and/or professional development credits and supports career long professional development of Rhode Island educators.
4. The new system aligns all certificates with a common expiration date. This will reduce the processing backlog in the certification office and reduce the number of times individuals need to contact the certification office to maintain a variety of certificates.

### **Change #1**

**The new system provides for the issuance of a three year Certificate of Eligibility for Employment to individuals applying for certification for the 1st time after January 1, 2005. This eliminates the issuance of a provisional certificate and links certification to employment in a school district**

#### ***What is a Certificate of Eligibility of Employment (CEE)?***

The CEE is the initial certificate issued to individuals after January 1, 2005 who satisfied all requirements for certification in Rhode Island. This certificate, valid for three years, enables individuals to apply for positions in our local school districts that match the validity of the CEE. The CEE can be renewed every three years by payment of the certification fee in effect at the time of renewal. Once a position is secured, the appointing authority provides the holder of the CEE with verification of employment. The CEE and documentation of employment will be used to obtain a Professional Certificate.

#### ***How do I renew a CEE?***

If employment as an educator is not secured during the three year CEE certification, you may apply for a CEE for the certification fee in effect at the time of renewal. There are no credits or professional development requirements attached to the renewal of a CEE.

#### ***Can I sub with a CEE?***

Yes, in addition to a substitute permit and a professional certificate an educator may substitute teach with a CEE.

#### ***If I hold a provisional or extended provisional certificate what happens?***

If you hold only a provisional or extended provisional certificate with no work experience in Rhode Island, upon renewal you will be issued a CEE. If you hold a professional certificate in addition to a provisional or extended provisional certificate all certificate areas will become professional certificates. Those certificates not in use will be inactive professional certificates.

#### ***I hold a provisional and/or extended provisional certificate in Rhode Island, but I am not currently employed in Rhode Island. How does this new system impact my certification?***

If you have never been employed in Rhode Island and hold no professional certificates in Rhode Island your provisional or extended provisional certificate will be renewed with a CEE.

## **Change # 2**

**The new system provides for a single five-year professional certificate for individuals employed in the schools of Rhode Island. This eliminates employment under a provisional certificate.**

### ***How do I move from a CEE to a professional certificate?***

Once a position is secured, the appointing authority provides the holder of the CEE with verification of employment that allows the educator to, along with the CEE, obtain a professional certificate.

### ***If I currently hold a professional certificate and meet the certification regulations for a new area what happens?***

You will be issued an inactive professional certificate in the new area of certification. Your I Plan must be written for the certificate in use.

### ***Do I still need to document employment to get a Professional Certificate?***

Yes. In order to change a CEE to a professional certificate, documentation of employment from the appointing authority is required.

### ***If I hold a provisional and/or extended provisional certification do I still need three years of documented service to obtain a professional certificate at the time of renewal?***

No. However, you must provide verification of employment from the appointing authority in order to obtain a professional certificate.

### ***I hold a professional certification in Rhode Island, but I am not currently employed in Rhode Island. How does this new system impact my certification?***

The professional certificate is renewed for a 5-year professional certificate. The certificate remains inactive until employment in Rhode Island is secured. At that time an I Plan must be written for the certificate in use.

### ***What if I am Life Certified?***

The proposed changes do not apply to those educators who are currently using only life certificates. However, the possession of a life certificate does not preclude an educator from preparing an I-Plan for any professional certificates in use that are not life certificates.

### **Change #3**

**The new system provides for certification renewal by the completion of an Individual Professional development Plan (I-Plan) every five years. This eliminates certification renewal based on nine college/university and/or professional development credits and supports career-long professional development of Rhode Island educators.**

#### ***What is an I Plan?***

An I-Plan is a goals-driven professional development plan for re-certification that is informed by self-study, grounded in professional standards, connected to school/district initiatives, and supported by plans for professional development. A five year I-Plan must be written and approved upon entering the profession in Rhode Island, and is used to renew the five year professional certificate in use. Upon renewal of the professional certificate, a new I-Plan is written and approved, and the cycle repeats itself as a career-long professional development activity.

The I-Plan program was designed by Rhode Island educators and enables all I educators to plan their own professional development for recertification. It builds on and respects the work that educators do as part of their profession.

#### ***When can an educator write and implement an I-Plan for re-certification?***

Beginning in January 2005, all Rhode Island educators renewing certificates currently in use, will develop I-Plans and implement professional development activities that align with their goals. Certification renewal is based on a documentation review of professional development activities.

#### ***What steps are required to develop an I-plan?***

- Complete a self-study to determine personal/ professional aspirations and pertinent school initiatives.
- Formulate 3-4 goals.
- Link goals with professional standards.
- Outline anticipated professional development categories for each goal
- Submit I-Plan for RIDE approval.

#### ***What are the categories of professional development that selection of activities aligned with I-Plan goals?***

- College or University Coursework
- Workshop/Conferences/Training Sessions
- Collaborative and Partnership Activities
- Involvement in Development/Improvement Processes
- Individually Guided Professional Development
- Professional Leadership Experiences

### ***How is an I-Plan approved?***

I-Plans are submitted to RIDE for review and approval. A panel of trained educators reviews each I-Plan according to standard criteria and communicates approval or need for modifications to the I-Planner.

### ***How is an I-Plan implemented?***

The educators participate in and document professional development activities that align with I-Plan goals. Annually I-Planners electronically file verification of each completed professional development activity through the Annual Update, and they can monitor progress on the number of hours and categories they have recorded.

### ***What are the requirements for verification of professional development that lead to completing an I-plan?***

- Educators submit verification and evidence of professional development for each year of the I-Plan.
- A minimum of 150 professional development hours is required for a five-year Professional Certificate to complete an I-Plan.
- Documentation reveals successful completion and verification of activities from at least 2 categories for each I-plan goal. If the goal is to pursue an advanced degree or additional certification, only one category (College/University Coursework is required).
- A minimum of at least 5 hours of professional development activity per category must be documented during the 5year period.
- A minimum of 20 hours of professional development activity per goal are required over the duration of the plan.

### ***What are the steps leading to recertification?***

- RIDE reviews the I-Planner's submission of Verification of Professional Development Activities and the Professional Analysis, a reflection on the skills/knowledge acquired and its application to professional practice.
- RIDE issues a Certificate of Completion
- The I-Planner submits to RIDE a renewal application, the Certificate of Completion, and the fee.

#### Change #4

**The new system aligns all certificates with a common expiration date. This will reduce the processing backlog in the certification office and reduce the number of times individuals need to contact the certification office to maintain a variety of certificates**

***I am employed in RI and currently hold a variety of certificates with different expiration dates. What happens to my certificates in the future under this new system?***

Educators employed in Rhode Island prior to January 1, 2005 will remain under regulations in place prior to the redesign of certification until the first certificate **that is being used** expires. At that time you will apply for renewal for that certificate. All other certificates you hold will be prorated (at \$20 per year) to have the same expiration date as the certificate in use you are renewing. Of course, an individual may choose not to renew a certification area at any time.

For example, if the professional certificate in use is expiring in August 2005 and two other professional certificates expiring in 2007, the first certificate would be issued through 2010 and the other two certificates expiring in 2007 would be exchanged for two professional certificates expiring in 2010. Of course, the educator may decide not to renew a certificate and allow it to become null upon expiration in 2007. This would then result in the three different certificates having a common expiration date of 2010. The fee to renew the first certificate through August 2010 would be \$100 and the other two professional certificates expiring in 2007 would each have an additional three years added to the expiration date. The fee for these two certificates would be pro-rated at \$20 per year per certificated or \$120. The total cost to the individual under this scenario would be \$220 to maintain all three certificates.